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Emerging issues in revitalizing public administration

Revitalizing public administration: strategic directions for the future**

Report of the Secretary-General

Executive summary

After having reviewed at its second and third sessions the issue of revitalizing public administration to facilitate the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, the Committee of Experts on Public Administration decided to review issues that emerge as crucial in the process of revitalizing public administration.

The present report attempts to provide initial input to the discussion by identifying three strategic areas in which the process of revitalization should focus. They are:

- Improving economic and social decision-making institutions and processes
- Strengthening integrity, transparency and accountability
- Reconciling security requirements with demands for social service delivery

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** The submission of this document was delayed, owing to the need to modify a chapter to take into account the consequences for public administration of the recent tsunami in the Indian Ocean.

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I. Introduction

1. The Committee of Experts on Public Administration, at its second session in 2003, discussed in detail how to enhance the capacity of public administration to implement the United Nations Millennium Declaration.[1] Under this main heading, the Committee discussed and made recommendations on: (a) strategies for high quality staffing in the public sector; (b) harnessing the power of information and communication technology; (c) alignment of financial management capacities; and (d) the mainstreaming of poverty reduction strategies within public administration.

2. At its third session, the Committee began consideration of strategies for revitalizing public administration and dealt with the issues of (a) enhancing human resources capacity, (b) the role of public administration as a consumer and producer of knowledge, and (c) the revitalizing of public administration through partnership building. At the same meeting, the Committee decided to review future strategic directions for revitalizing public administration in the light of emerging global issues.

3. The present report brings to the attention of the Committee for review and discussion three key challenges that public administration is facing and will continue to face in the next decade, namely:

- Improving economic and social decision-making institutions and processes
- Strengthening integrity, transparency and accountability
- Reconciling security requirements with demands for social service delivery

These challenges are being identified taking into account the major commitments made by Member States in the Millennium Summit and in other global conferences to fight poverty, disease and environmental degradation, and to improve the life of billions of citizens. They were also identified in the light of current global concerns for security from crime, terrorism and natural disasters, which have shaped the political agenda of many countries.

4. It is hoped that the members of the Committee will review these challenges, possibly identify other key emerging issues and formulate recommendations on how public administrations around the world can best respond to them.

II. Improving economic and social decision-making institutions and processes

5. Institutions and institutional capacities are often regarded as key to pursuing the socio-economic development in a country.[2] The implementation of the Millennium Development Goals requires a policy package that underpins strategies to stimulate economic growth and poverty reduction at the same time. It is also recognized that the implementation requires decision-making processes that are multi-stakeholder based.[3]

6. In recent times, many countries have made significant progress in aligning institutions to stimulate economic growth and mainstream the concerns of the poor within the policy-making processes of their Governments. However, continuous changes to the global situation, such as globalization and liberalization and rising

demands for social services without adequate resources, are putting new pressures on Governments and are contributing to new issues that challenge public sector management systems in a variety of ways, especially for developing countries.

7. Some argue that the new forces emerging from the ethos of the market-based value system may also compromise both the economic power as well as the value system of a State. The traditional value system of a State, which is predicated on welfare considerations for its citizens, is challenged by the profit orientation of the market system. As a result, each State is faced with the dual challenge of supporting market-based development to sustain economic growth and, at the same time, of ensuring equitable distribution of the benefits of growth to all its citizens, rich and poor. These two objectives, though, do not necessarily contradict each other. The goal of equity needs to be firmly embedded within the policy regimes of the State in order to increase the chance that economic growth will be accompanied by equitable distribution of its benefits.

8. It is against this backdrop, that many Governments, both developed and developing, are starting to recognize the need for a change in the way development ought to be viewed and the institutional process within which public policies and programmes are to be formulated. Increased democratization of the countries, as well as enhanced awareness among their citizens of their rights in the State, is also contributing to this change. In one way or another, every country is now taking initiatives to include non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations, community groups, business groups, etc. into decision-making processes.

9. At its third session, the Committee concluded that the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals depended on forging partnerships at the national, local and international levels. At the national and local levels, the role of partnerships is even more critical to enabling Governments to mobilize and expand the domestic resource base while fostering, through participation, accountability and transparency, the elements of improved savings, quality allocation and utilization. Partnerships, in particular with civil society organizations, can help mainstream the concerns of the poor and thus improve the formulation of pro-poor policies. They also recommended that Member States should pursue the issue of partnerships through South-South cooperation, in order to strengthen their capacities at all levels and for civil society to develop the necessary framework, tools and processes for formulation of pro-poor policies and programmes and the implementation of the commitments of the Millennium Development Goals.[4]

10. During the resumed fiftieth session of the General Assembly, Member States recognized the need to strengthen the partnership between the public and private sectors and civil society, as well as to provide an enabling environment for private sector activities (see A/50/225).

11. However, these emerging participatory practices lead to organizational changes, altering existing structures and processes and causing value changes, not only within the public sector management system itself but also in non-governmental organizations. In terms of structures and processes, while the former has to create new institutional space for and develop skills to engage in participative practices, NGOs and civil society organizations must equally acquire the capacity to conduct policy dialoguing in a constructive and sensitive manner. As a result of changes from the deepening and widening of decision-making processes,

participative practices are expected to manifest themselves in any number of different forms — ranging from the devolution of powers, collaborative management strategies, horizontal organizational structures and democratic broad governance to stakeholder advisory groups.

12. In addition to the issues of institutions and institutional processes is the issue of resources and resource management. Rising demands accompanied by rising expectations are putting pressure on Government capacities to mobilize resources to meet these demands. Governments are also equally under pressure to manage their existing resources more judiciously and expeditiously.

13. For developing countries, official development assistance (ODA) remains an important source of income. In many countries, ODA finances up to 80 per cent of the development budget. Furthermore, estimates show that an additional US$ 50.0 billion to $80.0 billion per annum are needed by developing countries to implement the Millennium Development Goals.[5] However, the immediate prospect of an increase in the amount of ODA looks somewhat less optimistic, at least in the short run. This scenario warrants every developing country to make quality and timely use of existing ODA resources. Aid management, therefore, constitutes an important part of public administration. There are two areas from which challenges of aid management seem to emanate — quality programming and results-oriented monitoring.

14. In view of the challenges faced by institutions and aid management concerns, the present report highlights the following as the two most important emerging issues confronting public sector management:

(a) Institutions and institutional processes that are relevant for pro-poor public policies and decision-making;

(b) Resource management, especially of aid.

A. Institutions and institutional processes

1. Institutions and institutional processes

15. The issue of institutions and institutional processes includes those organizational arrangements, structures and decision-making processes that support the socio-economic development of a country. However, it is now widely recognized that not all growth or development will contribute to the reduction of poverty, nor does growth always guarantee social justice. A pro-poor growth strategy basically depends on two key elements: (a) an analytical framework that underpins poverty reduction as the basis of all policies, especially the macroeconomic policy; and (b) an institutional framework and a decision-making process that allow inclusiveness.

16. Although it has been agreed that the Millennium Development Goals are the cornerstone of most national development and that they call for a more holistic approach to development, the institutional arrangements of planning, budgeting and implementing development continue to remain either sectorally oriented or bureaucratically driven. Such arrangements are incongruous to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for two reasons. First, the Millennium Development Goals require focus on poverty reduction and social development strategies and well coordinated, unified planning and implementation mechanisms.

Second, the planning process itself needs to go beyond the bureaucratic realm and link up with citizens (i.e. citizen groups and NGOs) to capture their concerns in a more practical and systematic manner.[6] Though many countries recognize the importance of this shift, progress is slow.

2. Management of development assistance

17. Complementing the institutions and processes is the issue of resource mobilization and development assistance management including utilization, especially of ODA. Here also, a great deal of analytical rigour is needed to mobilize ODA within the context of the Millennium Development Goals. It is equally important that aid management at the national level considers four important issues: (a) aid and its relationship to growth (most importantly to pro-poor growth, not all growth is pro-poor); (b) allocation of ODA resources and their relationships to the targeting of the poor; (c) public finance institutions and processes, such as budgetary allocations for local counterpart requirements and operations maintenance, and (d) an open and accountable monitoring of aid within the framework of results accomplishments. Here also progress is slow. The poverty reduction strategy papers initiated by the World Bank have made a start to place development within a poverty orientation. But several methodological and structural flaws associated with the poverty reduction strategy papers process render the initiative somewhat less tenable. Quite often the consultation processes that were initiated through the poverty reduction strategy papers initiatives have been regarded as opportunistic and ad hoc, resulting in implementation that does not make much of a dent in existing structures and in processes that are inimical to pro-poor growth. Moreover, since the poverty reduction strategy papers are funded, Governments have shown tendencies to incorporate them into their planning and budgeting system and not include them as part of their implementation plan for the Millennium Development Goals. It is of vital concern that Governments and donors reconcile these contradictions at the country level.

18. The Rome Declaration of 2003 and other initiatives of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) provide a means to improve ODA effectiveness and are a reflection of a better understanding among development partners. In particular, the Rome Declaration sets out the following objectives:[7]

- Ensure that development assistance harmonization efforts are adapted to the country context and that donor assistance is aligned with the development priorities of the recipient
- Expand country-led efforts to streamline donor procedures and practices
- Review and identify ways to adapt institutions' and countries' policies, procedures and practices to facilitate harmonization
- Implement the good practices, principles and standards formulated by the development community as the foundation of harmonization

19. Having enunciated these objectives and activities, the Rome Declaration calls upon partner countries to design in agreement with the donor community, country-based action plans for harmonization that will set out clear proposals that can be monitored to harmonize development assistance. The Rome Declaration does not explicitly request that countries harmonize their development assistance with

reference to the Millennium Development Goals. However, since all countries that adhere to the Rome Declaration are also signatories to the United Nations Millennium Declaration, then implicitly the Millennium Development Goals are the guidelines for their joint endeavours. The partnerships requested by the Rome Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals need not dilute national sovereignty or any particular focus within the framework of good governance. An example of such partnership is the Millennium Challenge Account announced by the United States Government in 2002 as a new foreign aid programme to assist countries that are relatively well governed.[8] Governance is measured primarily by three broad categories — ruling justly, investing in people and encouraging economic freedoms. Each of these in turn is measured by a number of indicators that the donor nation finds are in accord with its values and principles. Hence, while an overall framework for encouraging the Millennium Development Goals is maintained, the weights given to the various elements that make up good governance reflect donor preference.

20. At the national level, the requirements for enhanced harmonization of official development assistance may unwittingly imply more tasks for an already overstretched and under resourced public sector inundated by demands from donors regarding the monitoring, reporting and processing of development projects. Thus, in reality, during the transition from the traditional way of managing development assistance to the proposed new one, there will be even more pressure on developing countries in terms of public resources allocated for the task of harmonizing development assistance, and on the redesign of audit and monitoring systems to undertake this change. The payoff expected is more medium- and long-term, but both national Governments and international partners seem prepared to accommodate this for the sake of greater harmonization of official development assistance.

21. The management of development assistance is part of the wider concern for good governance, deepening democratic processes and capacity development. Indeed, good governance in all its forms, including pluralistic elections, an independent judiciary, the rule of law, a free press, transparency, accountability and inclusion, are increasingly seen as core criteria, by both bilateral and multilateral institutions in the allocation of development assistance.[9] Hence, the reform and revitalization of public administration is essential for managing development assistance and equally important in securing it. Attracting development assistance is in some respects as competitive as encouraging foreign direct investment by developing countries. Similarly, some of the preconditions, such as elimination of malfeasance and corruption, reduction of bureaucratic regulations, openness of the economy and an effective State, apply equally to the encouragement of development assistance and of foreign direct investment. In other respects, development assistance is required precisely in those areas of public services, such as education, health and infrastructure, which the private sector and foreign direct investment are unlikely to finance alone, and look to the State for their provision. Even where the private sector indicates an interest in partnering the public sector in the provision of services, in order for such services to be provided efficiently, while taking into account social objectives, it presupposes a strong and transparent regulatory framework that only a competent State can provide.[10]

B. Key issues to be examined

22. In the context of the above, it is important to examine the following on a cross-cultural basis:

- In what way, if at all, have current planning, budgeting and monitoring arrangements and systems mainstreamed the Millennium Development Goals as priorities in their national development strategies?
- What considerations and analysis are being undertaken to incorporate within the macroeconomic framework the concerns of the poor and the disadvantaged?
- Is institutional space given to incorporate civil society organizations, NGOs and other non-governmental groups into the national economic planning and budgeting process? If so, how? Are there examples of best practices?
- What kind of public administration structures and systems are needed to make these institutions more pro-poor and oriented towards the Millennium Development Goals?
- What are the relationships among the Millennium Development Goals, the parliamentary process and the national planning and implementation process?
- What are the risks and opportunities of complementing the parliamentary process with that of citizen engagement?
- Are there opportunities to make aid more accountable and oriented towards the Millennium Development Goals?
- What additional mechanisms can be identified for aid harmonization?
- How can aid accountability requirements be strengthened but at the same time standardized and simplified?
- What can be done to monitor aid on the basis of results?
- Are there opportunities to include the community in the aid monitoring process?
- What are the contradictions and complementarities between the poverty reduction strategy papers and the Millennium Development Goals, and what can be done to build on the former to strengthen the latter?

III. Strengthening integrity, transparency and accountability

23. The values of integrity, transparency and accountability in public administration have enjoyed a resurgence within the past three decades or so. Public administration will be revitalized in the eyes of the public it serves only when there is trust between the public and the administration. This trust can only be constructed around the integrity of public administration in the delivery of public services, transparency in its planning and operation of public affairs (especially through the participation of citizens) and accountability in the management and control of inputs, as well as in achievements. The trend of valuing integrity, transparency and accountability has been due mainly to the end of the Cold War, the spread of democratization, the shifting paradigm of the role of the State and changing social

mores. In addition, globalization made possible a rapid diffusion of ideas and practices, enabling citizens everywhere to demand higher standards of integrity, transparency and accountability in the management of public affairs.

24. Integrity, transparency and accountability have been identified by States members of the United Nations, collectively and individually, as part of the founding principles of public administration.[11] Therefore, they are the means and the ends to revitalizing or giving new life to public administrations. As such, these principles need to be espoused and seen to be practised by the leadership in all countries in order to revitalize public administration.

25. At the turn of the new millennium, the international community pledged to halve poverty in the world by 2015. In the light of this common goal, administrative integrity, transparency and accountability are also critical to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. At a practical level, these principles should guide the setting of priorities in public policy, programme designs, delivery of services and evaluation of government performance. In other words, integrity, transparency and accountability should define all activities in public administration that lead to improving the lives of the poor.

A. Integrity, transparency and accountability and the Millennium Development Goals

26. Is there a need to focus on how these principles translate into daily actions to achieve the Millennium Development Goals? Integrity motivates Governments to determine a fair and just share of their resources and to identify actions to alleviate poverty. It compels all partners to honour their commitments and promotes trust. Transparency requires all partners to make available and accessible the information necessary to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Accessibility requires that the information being disseminated has been solicited in ways that are gender and culturally sensitive. Accountability demands that those providing resources, delivering programmes and services and receiving assistance are held liable, answerable, and responsible. It ensures that public rather than private interests guide decision-making in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

27. Furthermore, these principles are co-dependent. Integrity, by requiring that the public interest be paramount, provides the basis for transparency and accountability. Transparency without accountability becomes meaningless and makes a mockery of good governance. Accountability depends on transparency or making available the necessary information. Transparency and accountability without integrity may not end up serving the public interest. In addition, not only is the revitalization of public administration necessary to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, but itself depends upon the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. That is, in developing countries, unless the citizens are fed, healthy and receive basic education, they will not be capable of or interested in demanding a renewed public administration.

B. Administrative challenges for achieving the Millennium Development Goals

28. Prioritizing public policies, designing programmes, delivering services and evaluating government performance face challenges related to the strengthening and safeguarding of integrity, transparency and accountability in the management of public affairs.

29. Between now and 2015, donor and recipient Governments need to honour their original pledges towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals in setting their public policy priority.[12] For instance, two thirds of the Millennium Development Goal challenges exist in sub-Saharan Africa alone. The Millennium Project estimates that based on average per capita costs in selected African countries, $100 per person per year are required to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Of this total, there is a shortfall of $50 per person per year that can only be met through international assistance.[13] Clearly, safeguarding of integrity, transparency and accountability is becoming an important issue in creating an enabling environment for this additional flow of resources.

30. Integrity, transparency and accountability are also crucial to creating responsive programmes. For example, in the inception and implementation of national poverty reduction strategy papers, the principle of transparency would require that Governments and multilateral organizations ensure that the intended recipients have access to information about and participate in decisions that affect their lives. Although the process may seem initially unwieldy and time-consuming, participation by the poor is not only necessary to good governance but also to the effectiveness of the poverty reduction strategy papers. There are innovations, ranging from rural development networks to the application of information and communication technologies, that can improve information dissemination and consultations. They can result in more integrity, transparency and accountability in public programmes.

31. These principles should also be applied in delivering public services. They can be inculcated through practical measures in the institutions and people providing basic infrastructure and services. At the institutional level, rules, management systems and administrative procedures should require honest reporting, sharing of information and accountability for performance. At the people level, institutional values and standards of conduct and performance should be clearly communicated, monitored and enforced. Such measures prevent and detect "leakages" and corruption in delivering public goods and services. Putting in place sound management practices, as well as introducing and enforcing codes of conduct, should increase the chances that services are delivered more ethically, effectively and efficiently.

32. Finally, these principles require all public organizations to evaluate their performance. Since the principles apply to personal and organizational behaviour, adherence to them is difficult to monitor and measure. However, by doing so, public organizations will be able to identify good practices, learn from their failures and determine whether their activities are contributing to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. To carry out serious evaluation, public organizations need to clearly state intended results and develop indicators for measuring the impact of their activities. This means that units should be designated and methodologies

developed to practically and cost-efficiently collect information. It also means that appropriate remedial action needs to be taken, based on evaluations.

C. Regional trends in safeguarding integrity, transparency and accountability

33. At the risk of oversimplification, some regional trends can be observed as to where the States Members of the United Nations are now in meeting the challenges described above.

34. Economically affluent and politically stable countries of the OECD are well placed to meet the challenges. The adoption of the OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions in 1997 criminalized the bribery of foreign officials, with the intent to reduce bribery by multinational companies of public officials in developing countries. The OECD countries also adopted the Principles for Managing Ethics in the Public Service in 1998 and issued Guidelines for Managing Conflict-of-Interest in the Public Sector in 2003. Currently, OECD member States are developing an assessment framework for evaluating the effectiveness of their ethics programmes.

35. Following the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, countries in Central and Eastern Europe are at varying stages of meeting the challenges in their transition from socialist to market-based economies. Ten countries joined the fifth enlargement of the European Union (EU) in 2004, having fulfilled the Copenhagen Criteria that contribute to institutionalizing EU standards for governance and public administration. The next round of candidate countries is also preparing to adopt the *acquis communautaire* of EU, including institutional measures for improving integrity, transparency and accountability.

36. Supported by the initiative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the OECD on Good Governance for Development in Arab Countries, a number of Arab countries have been raising the importance of integrity, transparency and accountability. The region is currently home to geopolitically destabilizing risks, such as the ongoing Arab-Israeli conflict and the imposed regime change in Iraq. These hot spots require attention in preventing leakages and monitoring the usage of public resources. Currently, there is no regional standard-setting instrument. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, in partnership with the Government of Italy, has also been supporting the Programme for Innovation in Public Administration in the Euro-Mediterranean Region to strengthen public administration.

37. A study carried out by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in 1999 and 2000 showed that although legislative and administrative standards for public servants were in place in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa, they were often outdated, not well communicated and not well institutionalized.[14] In 2003, the African Union concluded the Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption, although its ratification has been slow. In addition, integrity, transparency and accountability in public administration are inherent among the principles of the New Partnership for Africa's Development laid out in 2001. To measure conformity with these principles, the African Peer Review Mechanism was introduced in 2003. In addition, the Charter for the Public Service in Africa was adopted in 2001 at the third Pan-African Conference of Public Service Ministers.

38. For Latin America, many countries are now in the institution-building phase (e.g., the Anti-Corruption Unit of the Ministry of Justice of Argentina, the Public Ethics Commission of Brazil), while others are introducing civil service reforms (e.g., Mexico, Peru, etc.). The region also witnessed some grand political corruption cases, such as in Peru, under the previous administration. The first of its kind of international legal instruments, the Inter-American Convention against Corruption of the Organization of American States went into force in 1997. The Convention requires its parties not only to criminalize corrupt activities by public officials but also to take preventive measures that safeguard integrity, transparency and accountability. Adopted in 2003 at the Fifth Ibero-American Conference of Ministers for Public Administration and State Reform, the Ibero-American Charter for the Public Service complements the Convention by serving as a reference for countries to modernize and professionalize their public administrations.

39. The Asia and Pacific region is also characterized by countries with a range of institutional development in overseeing integrity, transparency and accountability. Some countries have highly developed and effective anti-corruption institutions that serve as a model for other countries (e.g., Hong Kong SAR China, Singapore, etc.). Other countries have recently introduced legislation and are setting up institutions (e.g., Mongolia, etc.). Now, with the current tsunami disaster relief aid being given with calls for greater accountability, affected South Asian nations will have to demonstrate integrity, transparency and accountability in their reconstruction activities. Rather than adopt a regional legal instrument, 36 countries in Asia and the Pacific committed to the Anti-Corruption Action Plan for Asia and the Pacific. Launched in 2000 and supported by the Asian Development Bank and OECD, the Action Plan is centred around technical assistance.

D. Key issues to be examined

40. The successful negotiation of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption in 2003 (see General Assembly resolution 58/4) portends a new era of international cooperation. However, given the challenges and trends described above, the emerging issues in strengthening and safeguarding integrity, transparency and integrity in public administration differ among developed and developing countries. At the same time, all countries need to work together to meet the Millennium Development Goals. The following issues need the attention of the Committee of Experts in Public Administration:

(a) Integrity, transparency and accountability in the security sector bears scrutiny. With countering terrorism high on the public agenda and with the privatization of many security functions in many countries, integrity, transparency and accountability of the security sector requires close scrutiny and openness in both its programmes, budgets and expenditures;

(b) Methodologies for ascertaining levels of integrity, transparency and accountability in the public sector. For many countries, demonstrating the effectiveness of public administration integrity programmes and transparency and accountability measures is becoming a priority. This preoccupation is spawning a comparison of methodologies, more rigorous definitions of desired outcomes and cost-effectiveness of programme components. It is relatively easier to put institutions in place, but from a behavioural point of view it is more difficult to

determine the levels of success in strengthening integrity, transparency and accountability;

(c) Integrity, transparency and accountability in the management of foreign aid. There have also been calls for better accountability measures in development aid, especially in the current international relief efforts for the tsunami disaster in South Asia. In most cases recipients of foreign aid are promised funds for programmes and often receive either far less than what was promised or nothing at all. This jeopardizes development programmes and undermines the legitimacy and credibility of recipient Governments. Through what mechanisms can recipient countries bear on donors and development partners to honour commitments and be transparent in terms of possible conditionality?

(d) Ensuring citizens' participation and networking in strengthening integrity, transparency and accountability. For developing countries, introducing targeted professionalization and integrity programmes within public administrations is still relatively new and is seen to be an important complement to enforcement activities. For building the institutional capacity of oversight agencies, a better definition and strengthening of their independence is necessary. In addition, increased citizen access to government information and civic education creates or reinforces the watchdog function of citizens, a function either foreign to or weak in many countries. An important component of this function is for the press to be made aware of the importance of fair reporting on the integrity, transparency and accountability of public sector entities.

41. Finally, for all countries, more cross-border cooperation for the prosecution of corrupt or criminal acts and recovery of assets will hopefully result from implementing the Convention. By recovering State assets, preventing leakages and making public services more accountable, the international community stands a better chance of meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

IV. Reconciling security requirements with demands for social service delivery

42. An emerging challenge is related to the shift of focus in the agenda of many Governments from social and economic development to security issues. This shift creates a major disconnect between those who strongly believe that public administration is an important tool for socio-economic development, the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, the protection of the environment, etc., and those who, due to recent world wide events, see public administration's primary role as that of combating terrorism, ensuring safety and security and fighting cross-border criminality. Whereas many Governments have decided to react to these challenges by heavily investing in security issues, while neglecting the other fundamental dimension of providing social services and attending to the needs of the poor, a more balanced and integrated approach to these challenges is that of incorporating both concepts under the umbrella of "human security".

A. The "human security" approach

43. This position is in line with what the Commission on Human Security stated in its latest report that human security is a response to the challenges in today's world. Policies and institutions must respond to these insecurities in stronger and more integrated ways. Human security means protecting vital freedoms. It means protecting people from critical and pervasive threats and situations and building on their strengths and aspirations. Human security connects different types of freedoms — freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom to take action on one's own behalf.[15] As the Commission underlined in its report, "promoting democratic principles is a step towards attaining human security and development. It enables people to participate in governance and make their voices heard. This requires building strong institutions, establishing the rule of law and empowering people".[15] A number of Governments have created institutions and invested resources to address issues of security in the strictest sense, taking away important resources required for poverty alleviation, social services and the environment, and disaster prevention and mitigation. Achieving human security means not only ensuring physical safety and security but also building on and going beyond the Millennium Development Goals by undertaking efforts to address the full range of critical and pervasive threats facing people. The concept of security should encompass not only war between States, terrorism and violence within states but also poverty, infectious diseases, environmental degradation and disaster prevention and mitigation. According to the Secretary-General (see A/59/565), development has to be the first line of defence for a collective security system that takes prevention seriously. Moreover, he adds that if there is to be a new security consensus, it must start with the understanding that the front-line actors in dealing with all the threats we face, new and old, continue to be individual sovereign States. It should also be noted that it is the lack of democracy and good governance that leads to terrorism. It is in the midst of poor governance, ethnic and/or religion tensions, as well as steep inequalities that lead to disenfranchisement, that violence and terror find fertile ground to grow and develop. In this respect, it is worthwhile mentioning that according to the Millennium Project Report the scale-up of investment strategies to achieve the Millennium Development Goals requires a commitment to good governance. This includes upholding the rule of law through administrative and civil services and through legal and judicial institutions. It also includes promoting human rights, particularly civil liberties and political freedom. These critical elements of governance serve as vital complements to the scaling-up of public sector management capacity.[16] The central challenge for public administration today is therefore not whether to focus more heavily on security in the strictest sense or on developmental issues per se, but to tackle in a balanced and integrated way all aspects of human security, which are interrelated. In fact, looking exclusively at the superficial symptoms of physical security and the prevention of terrorism or violence provides at best a partial, short-term solution. Ultimately, it is only by redressing and removing underlying causes of violence and insecurity, which stem from failures of governance and public administration to provide overall protection to citizens from fear and want, that stability and security can be obtained.

B. Key Issues to Be Examined

How to strengthen crisis and emergency management capacities

44. Crisis and management is a key function of public administration, and it cuts across service delivery and delivery functions. Crisis, disasters and emergencies are critical issues of global, as well as national concern, with multiple dimensions and sudden and chaotic features that demand both linear and non-linear approaches for prevention and management. The problems facing public administrations on this important issue are many, and have many dimensions that include the social, political, economic, cultural, financial, managerial, institutional and ethical. Many natural and man-made crises develop slowly with causes rooted in past policy and administrative actions, while others are sudden and unexpected, either natural or man-made disasters and crises, with unknown dimensions and uncertainties, both of which affect service delivery and the development functions of public administrations that are already under stress. These problems and crises demand urgent attention with anticipatory capacity-building. The challenge consists in intensifying collective efforts to reduce the number and effects of natural and man-made disasters, preventive and mitigating measures, and turning disasters and crises into future-oriented opportunities.

45. What should Governments and public administrations do in case of multiple disasters and crises? Are they prepared to handle unexpected natural and man-made disasters? Most Governments and their public administration systems are unequipped to deal with them. Crises and disasters strike all the time, and many are unpredictable. Without adequate anticipatory and future-oriented capacities, Governments and public administrations can not respond to natural and man-made disasters. They all demand emergency attention. In fact, a central feature of all crises is a sense of urgency, and in many cases urgency becomes the most compelling crises characteristic. Key to successful management of public service delivery and sustainable development is preparedness. Preparedness requires the training and development of personnel for emergency management, managerial knowledge and skills for crises management and good governance skills to involve all stakeholders through participation. Preparedness requires strategic thinking, a futuristic mindset and anticipatory skills. Governments and public administrations are challenged to pursue a strategic policy and an administrative plan of action to prepare a generation of tomorrow's managers and skilled workers.

What type of decision-making mechanisms can lead to achieving human security in an holistic manner?

46. Given the new, emerging national and global challenges, a fundamental and difficult policy decision has to be made by government leaders to strike a balance between these two major dimensions of service delivery, namely social and security services. Both are important, and both require allocation of scarce resources that are increasingly hard to acquire. Key questions arise such as: should expenditures on security and fighting terrorism outweigh those on other service areas that include security from hunger and poverty, malnutrition, armed conflict, etc.? What is the right balance? These are key public policy questions that require genuine democratic participation of all stakeholders and institutions in society with openness and transparency.

Partnership-building reforms

47. An important feature of new governance and public administration is taking a major step away from the traditional unilateral action in delivery and problem solving and towards getting things done through partnership-based organizational arrangements. Institutional reforms are needed to allow, through legislative and executive actions, various models and strategies of partnership-building with private sector, other government organizations, civil society institutions, non-profit organizations and other domestic and international organizations in service delivery functions. These functions range from garbage collection, health services, water treatment and security functions of not only law and order for peace and social control but also security from other problems noted earlier. Partnership-building promotes sharing public service delivery responsibility and achievement, a quality that empowers civil society.

Institutional reforms to promote global cooperation

48. New organizational arrangements may be needed or old ones upgraded to promote cooperation among agencies and international organizations in the delivery of public services that concern the global community at large. These include, for example, cooperation through sharing information and operational tasks in fighting global crime, terrorism and trafficking of humans and drugs across borders or to prevent and mitigate disasters. Also, cooperation with such United Nations agencies as the International Labour Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Health Organization, and others on issues of health, food, crises and labour, is essential.

Security sector reform

49. Problems generating the need for reform of this sector are generally the result of poor governance. Government and public administration must address the roots of these problems by paying close attention to the following key elements: (a) strengthening the civilian authority, oversight and management of security forces; (b) developing mechanisms for transparency in security sector planning, management and budgeting; and (c) establishing better interface with civil society and encouraging their capacity to actively monitor the security sector and have influence on defence policy, resource allocation and related issues. Security sector reform must include specialized sensitivity training programmes for law enforcement personnel on the issues of international human rights, the Geneva Conventions, community-based security measures and peace-building norms.

Institutional and managerial reforms required to adapt to changing dynamics of service delivery

50. A sound public management system requires suitable institutional arrangements that can respond to the changing dynamics of its environment, to learn how to manage and adapt to outside challenges, and to provide services to its demanding citizens and stakeholders with efficiency and effectiveness. To put it simply, a sound management system cannot operate with rigid bureaucratic structures and institutional inflexibilities. To revitalize public administration in the twenty-first century, major institutional reforms are needed in line with efforts to build and sustain a sound public management system. Today's institutional

capacities are obsolete for tomorrow's changing world with new problems and crises. An institutional approach to reform and capacity enhancement is holistic and combines the advantages of both approaches. The strengthening of key actors in public service and administration processes is essential, and this can be done by reforming and empowering the institutions that are responsible for maintenance of law and order, legislation, enforcement and adjudication; delivery of basic services, especially with regard to poverty reduction, and provision of health and education, etc.; regulatory functions of the marketplace and other issues to bolster equitable growth; and the promotion of principles and elements that contribute to good governance and sound management. These and the other reforms listed above must be institutionalized by indigenous value systems and through the genuine participation of all stakeholders whose input contributes to the legitimacy of the Government and the governance processes they are part of.

Notes

[1] General Assembly resolution 55/2.

[2] The importance of public administration and institutions, in particular, is one of the recurring themes of General Assembly resolution 50/225.

[3] The importance of enabling the institutional environment needed to implement the Millennium Development Goals has been highlighted in the United Nations Millennium Declaration (see General Assembly resolution 55/2 and A/59/282).

[4] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2004, Supplement No. 44* (E/2004/44).

[5] For the costing of the Millennium Development Goals see Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals, The Millennium Project, 2005, available at www.unmillenniumproject.org.

[6] See "Civil society's contribution to the Millennium Development Goals", Chapter 8, A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals, Millennium Project, available at www.unmillenniumproject.org. See also E/C.16/2004/5.

[7] The text of the Rome Declaration on Aid Harmonization and associated documentation is available at www.aidharmonization.org.

[8] A description of the work of the Millennium Challenge Account is available at www.mca.gov. For a summary of its provisions in the context of governance, see chapter 7, Governance to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals, of the Millennium Project report, Investing in Development, at www.unmillenniumproject.org.

[9] It is interesting how economic gurus who once thought that market processes were sufficient for development irrespective of an effective regulatory framework such as the rule of law, have changed their minds. Milton Friedman's advice to countries exiting from communism apparently was " privatize, privatize, privatize". He now admits "I was wrong. It turns out that the rule of law is probably more basic than privatization". Quoted by Martin Wolf in "Why a President's Greatest Challenge is State Building" *Financial Times* (London), 3 November 2004.

[10] On these and related issues see Dennis A. Rondinelli and G. Shabbir Cheema, editors, *Reinventing Government for the Twenty-First Century*, Kumarian Press, 2003.

[11] These principles have been incorporated into the founding documents of the United Nations and its administration, such as the Charter and the Staff Rules. Moreover, many Member States also list them among the core values of their public administrations.

[12] If they do not, the utility of multilateral forums themselves, such as the Millennium Assembly, could be questioned. They need to apply the principles of integrity, transparency and accountability in considering policy options and shifts required to achieve the collective vision of the United Nations Millennium Declaration.

[13] $45 per person per year are required to meet basic infrastructural needs, $30 per person per year for basic health needs, $15 per person per year for basic education, and $10 per person per year for other high priority items. Of the required $100 per person per year, $40 per person per year can reasonably be covered by domestic resource mobilization while $60 per person per year would require international assistance. Since many countries already receive international help of $10 per person per year, the result is a shortfall of $50 per person per year. (See Jeffrey Sachs, "Developing Africa's Economy: Doing the sums on Africa", *The Economist*, 20 May 2004).

[14] See Public Service Ethics in Africa, ST/ESA/PAD/SER.E/23.

[15] *Human Security Now: Protecting and Empowering People* (United Nations publication, Sales No. 03.III.V.2).

[16] United Nations Millennium Project Report, p. 110, available at www.unmillenniumproject.org.